

Husband and Wife Selected as 2005 Sailors of the Year for Their Commands

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NORFOLK, Va. (NNS) -- Family, career and service to country brought Sonar Technician (Surface) 1st Class (SW) Robert Medearis and his wife, Fire Controlman 1st Class (SW/AW) Tammy Medearis, to be honored as they were selected as Sailor of the Year (SOY) for their respective commands in January 2006.

Robert Medearis was selected 2005 SOY for Commander, Undersea Surveillance (CUS) and Tammy Medearis was selected 2005 SOY for USS Theodore Roosevelt (CVN 71).

Aboard Roosevelt, Tammy, raised in Harrison, Ark., is both a command enlisted surface warfare and enlisted aviation warfare specialist program instructor and board member, a member of the command assessment team and the command 3M training team on top of a number of departmental and divisional duties including leading petty officer for her division.

"I think my duties are crucial to my command because as a NATO Seasparrow technician and LPO, I am in charge of weapons systems that protect this crew," she explained.

"My collateral duties are important to me because a large amount of them involve training something I just enjoy doing," said Tammy.

Master Chief Fire Controlman (SW/AW) Phillip Bishop, branch leading chief petty officer for Combat Systems Maintenance onboard Roosevelt attributes her over all success to professionalism.

"She takes the lead both professionally-with her own career-and she takes care of her people in the process. She does an exceptional job at combining the two," said Bishop.

Robert has managed to match her in this career "cat and mouse game" with an impressive list of accomplishments as well. Since reporting to CUS in January 2001, the Long Island, N.Y., native has earned Sailor of the Quarter honors twice, administering the command training program, and taken on departmental Physical Readiness Training Coordinator duties to name a few.

"I enjoy everything I'm involved in," said Robert. "I don't just do it to get ahead, I do it because it's something I believe in."

Senior Chief Sonar Technician (Surface) (SW) Scott Moore, of training department at CUS attributes Robert's success to good old fashion elbow grease.

"Petty Officer Medearis is a hard charging first class who tackles every task assigned with determination and zeal," said Moore.

Robert tries to think out of the box at all times, something he also attributes to his wife.

"She is always taking on another task and looking for new ways to better her peers and help them succeed," said Robert. This way of thinking is what led Robert to obtain permission to convert an unused office into a command fitness facility.

It also has led him to come up with many ways to educate his peers. One such way is implementing the "Gram of the Week," an in depth analysis of knowledge directly related to the core of the sonar technician's job.

"I want to provide them not only with test material but information that they can use when doing their job," said Robert.

Education is a big part of the bond that Robert and Tammy share. "During deployments, we continue to push each other by sending study materials and study tips via email," said Robert. The two are also actively working toward degrees, something Robert said is an important life tool.

"People wait too long to get their degrees," he explained. "They wait until right before it's time for them to get out and then rush to get all their classes so that they can take advantage of the tuition assistance. It's important to have your degree not just for after your Navy career."

"A degree is also important because it proves you are committed to your self-improvement," added Tammy.

The two will both be going on to the next round of competition, something Tammy admits - with a smile - is the result of their friendly competition.

"Since I have recently become eligible for chief petty officer, our goal is to be selected together. We support each other and help each other out as much as we can," said Tammy.

Tammy sums up getting selected at the same time to one thing: good old fashion motivation.

"We are both hard workers so I guess that is our advantage from every one else in the competition," she explained. "We share twice the motivation which, of course, includes our two beautiful daughters."